

THE  
LIFE, TRIAL, &c,  
OF  
WILLIAM HAWKE,

The notorious Highwayman ;

CONTAINING

An Account of all the remarkable Robberies he  
committed before and since his Return from  
Transportation ; with the Manner in which he  
was apprehended, and his Behaviour during the  
Time he was under Sentence of Death,

Also an Account of

FIELD his Companion,

Who was tried at *Kingston* in *Surry*, about Twelve  
Months ago, and hanged on *Kennington-Common*.

To which is added,

A full Discription of the Impositions and Decep-  
tions practiced by Swindlers, Sharps, Gamblers,  
&c. in and about London.

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L O N D O N :

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256

W. Thugrave!



Hawke robbing the Quakers on  
Finchley-Common.



THE  
Life, Trial, and Execution  
OF  
WILLIAM HAWKE, &c.



\*\*\* WILLIAM HAWKE, was born at Ux-  
\* W \* bridge, in the county of Middlesex, in  
\* \* the year 1744, of honest, but poor and  
\*\*\* industrious parents, who not being able  
to give him a trade, he followed several different  
branches in order to get a livelihood in the coun-  
try, till the age of 16; but not thinking himself  
accomplished by living near his friends, must come  
to London (like numbers of unguarded youths, who  
not

not content with a sufficiency at home, must risk the hazard of the dye of fortune, and too often falls a sacrifice to their own obstinate folly !) accordingly he set off, and came to this city in the year 1761.

A short time after his arrival, he got acquainted with a jeweller, by which means he acquired a little knowledge in that branch ; and, if he had not gave his mind over to bad company, he might have done very well ; but vain, like many more, must immitate the *Flash gentleman*, as they term it, and being fond of their company, he soon found his income not sufficient to support his nightly meetings.

He, therefore, soon after took lodgings in Leather-lane, Holborn; and by using a house resorted to by those gentry, in the neighbourhood, got acquainted with Field, Milsom, and M'Donald, three notorious highwaymen and housebreakers, who seeing him a bold daring youth, did not let him rest 'till they had brought him over to their wicked way of life, when they did several daring robberies, in and about the metropolis ; one in particular they committed near Mother Red Cap's at Holloway, for which Milsom and M'Donald were apprehended and tried at the Old Bailey ; but no positive evidence appearing against Milsom, he was discharged, and his companion received sentence of death, and was soon after executed.

Hawke and Field reigned without much interruption for three or four years after, until they  
were



were apprehended for a robbery, tried at the Old Bailey, and both sentenced to be transported.

Soon after their trial, they with one Murphy, attempted to break out of a place in Newgate called the Lower Ward, by means of a woman conveying into the prison to them, two large iron crows, and many other implements, by which means they had almost effected their escape; but some very suspicious circumstances arising from their behaviour, they were strictly watched by the keepers, who detected them in the execution of their design; in consequence of which they were loaded with the heaviest irons that could be found in the prison, and closely confined in the cells till the day they were put on board the transport vessel at Blackwall.

Being in America not a year, and full of money, they soon found means to get over to Ireland, where they committed a great number of the most desperate highway robberies that had ever been heard of in that kingdom, since Redmond O'Hanlan's time; but at length, finding it impossible to remain any longer in that part, they determined to return to their native field of pleasure, and accordingly shipped themselves and property, on board a vessel bound for Park-gate, and, arrived in a few days after.

As soon as they got to Chester they purchased horses, pistols, hangers and faddie-bags, and set out on the road leading to London, but they had not proceeded above six miles before they overtook the carriage of Richard Prinald, Esq; they rode  
round

round the coach three or four times before they ordered the driver to stop; Mr. Prinald let down the glass, and observed a pistol clapped to his breast, and another by Hawke exactly to his ear. The robbers continued silent for some time, when Mr. Prinnald having recovered from the sudden fright, gave them a purse containing thirteen pounds: Hawke received the money, and having put it into his waistcoat pocket, said, *Sir I suppose you wear a watch?* the gentleman declaring he had not one about him, they proceeded on their journey and left him.

Having sold the horses they bought at Chester, they purchased other necessaries, and assuming the dress of farmers, they directed their course towards Northampton, where they remained a few days; and having learnt that a capital person in that town was upon his return from London, where he had been to sell a large quantity of grain, they set forwards in expectation of getting a considerable booty, and stopped him near Dunstable, when they robbed him of about six pounds, he having fortunately lodged the cash he had received in the hands of a banker before he left town.

Nothing of note happened on their road to town worthy notice; but as soon as they arrived, they found out their old companions, who all spent several days in merry-making, on the joyful meeting; they then determined to continue their old way of life, and all promised to stand by each other

other, not to engage with any other of their own occupation.

Soon after their return they were joined by Edward Millsom; and these three were considered as the most bold and desperate gang of highwaymen that had ever been in England. They seemed to have no fear of being apprehended, frequently robbing travellers in open day, and in the most populous roads about London.

Considering the great number of their singularly daring offences, it is really amazing that they reigned so long the most successful, and at the same time, the most incautious of their illegal profession; for after committing any robbery, they would often adjourn to some neighbouring ale-house or inn, and publicly discourse on the common occurrences they had met with on the road, and the rout they meant to pursue the day following; and were so extremely communicative, that they seemed only desirous to conceal the actual commission of their crimes: besides this, their persons had been so minutely described, that had the officers of justice fallen into the same tract with them, they must inevitably have been apprehended some time ago.

In July last, near Kensington, they robbed Mr. Stuart of about ten pounds and his watch. A few days after Hawke left his companions at Brentford, and riding towards Hounslow, met the chariot of Mr. Christie, the Auctioneer in Pall-Mall, within two hundred yards of that town, and ordered the driver to stop: he then came to the side  
of

of the carriage where Mr. Christie sat, and robbed him and his lady of a considerable sum in money, and their watches, with which he rode off with great deliberation, and seemingly unconcern. Mr. Christie perceiving him to ride very leizurely along, had determined to pursue and endeavour to take them, but his lady, who had been excessively intimidated by the villain's threats, hearing this resolution, fainted away, by which circumstance he got clear off with his booty.

Soon after Mr. Fox, oilman in Fleet-street, was robbed of some money on the highway, and when the above men were before Sir John Fielding, the servant to Mr. Fox, swore to the identity of the two, Hawke and Field.

About the latter end of July they stopped the Gloucester stage, near Hillington, and robbed Mr. Boucher of about fourteen pounds in cash, and a gold watch; the gold watch was found in Hawke's house, on Barnes Common.

On Saturday, the 31<sup>st</sup> of July, in the evening Mr. Gill was robbed, of his money, by a highwayman, on Wimbledon-common, and when he came within a short space of Vauxhall Turnpike, his coach was again stopped, when Hawke and Milson waited at a few yards distance, while Field pointed a pistol to his breast and demanded his property. The gentleman said his cash had been taken away before, but delivered a draft on the cashiers of the bank for fourteen pounds fourteen shillings, which the robber read, and then returned it, at the same time demanding his watch. Mr. Gill



Gill endeavoured to hold him in conversation, expecting that some passengers might come up, but the villain perceiving his drift, threatned to fire, upon which the watch was delivered, and Field joined his comrades again and rode off.

A short time after the carriage of Mrs. Howard, was stopped by three men, who robbed the lady of a valuable gold watch, which was afterwards found in Hawke's house, on Barne's Common, where another gold watch was found belonging to Mrs. Ferguson, who was robbed much about the same time.

On Monday the 2d of August, Mr. Mount and son, was stopped near Kennington turnpike, by three men, who robbed them of their watches and some money, and soon after followed the carriage, and stopped it a second time, when the fellows searched both the gentlemen, and took from one of them a pair of gold studs, which, upon the partition of their booty, fell to the share of Field, who made a present of them to his wife.

The day following this last robbery, these three villains were apprehended by a party of Sir John Fielding's men, and conducted to the office in Bow-street, from whence notice was immediately dispatched to the several parties who had lodged informations against them, to attend at their public examination, which was appointed for the day following.

The same day Field's wife was secured, and brought before the Bench for examination with her husband, when one of the gold studs, taken

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from

from young Mr. Mount, found in her possession, was produced and swore to. Mrs. Field, with a view to prevent the fact being proved against her husband, declared she had them left her by a friend. Her declaration was tender towards her husband, but his was still more so; for he said, "On condition his wife should be discharged, he would confess where many valuable effects had been deposited." This proposal was readily accepted, and the Bench ordered about fourteen pounds which had been found upon her, to be immediately returned to her. Hawke was committed to Tothill-Fields Bridewell, and the other two to New Prison, in order for examination the following Wednesday: But before the arrival of that period, Milson and Field, by means of saws and other emplements, freed themselves from their irons, and very nearly effected their escape, when their designs was discovered by the keepers, and happily frustrated. Field's wife was a second time apprehended, and charged of conveying the saws to her husband; she confessed the fact, alledging, that in a matter on which her husband's life depended, if her conduct was not justifiable, it was, at least, excusable in a wife to a husband.

The wives of Field and Milson were sisters; and that as they were going in a hackney coach to New Prison, Mrs. Field unlaced her stays, and under them secreted the tools, which she delivered to her husband in the prison.

Mrs. Field had been formerly kept by ——— Keeble, Esq; and that gentleman appeared in her behalf,

behalf, and spoke of her with great respect: he offered, upon condition that she should not visit her husband, to become bound for her appearance at the sessions. She dropped on her knees, begging not to be kept from seeing him, saying, *Be him what he will, he is my husband!*—It was really a melancholly scene to see her in this situation, as we find this to be but her second appearance before justice, and his proceedings contrary to her repeated intreaties. Mr. Keeble, and her father-in-law, was bound for her appearance.

They had been married exactly a month that day he was taken; she was recommended by her own sister, Milson's wife, as a man that would make her happy; but the day after marriage, she found him to be a Highwayman! From the tenderness she bore him, she was obliged to screen his bad practices, and endeavoured to persuade him into a reputable way of life; but her efforts were all in vain; so strong was he attached to the infamous course he had pursued, altho' she assured him, her interest was sufficient to procure him a place, that would require little attendance, and a handsome salary; but, he declared, that he had long expected, and did not desire to avoid making his exit at Tyburn, or Kennington Common.

Field was tried at Kingston in the county of Surry, about a year ago, for robbing on the highway, received sentence of death, and was executed on Kennington Common.

Before he died, he declared he had took upwards of 2000*l.* in money in six months time, besides watches,



watches, &c. but to shew himself the gentleman, went down to Newmarket meeting, and lost upwards of 1000*l.* according to the old saying, 'Easy come, easy go' tho' in general they pay too dear for it in the long run, with the loss of their life; and when too late, wish they had taken advice of their friend, which often proves fatal to their disconsolate parents, and brings a disgrace on the family; it is therefore hoped his untimely end will be a warning to every youth who reads this account, to shun bad company, and not like these unhappy wretches, cut off in the prime of life, loaded with weighty irons, and confined in a dungeon, that when the fatal hour is come, they are hardly allowed time to take the last farwel of their most dearest friends!—But to return to the subject.

Milsom's wife was also apprehended, and brought to the bar, but he pleaded with great earnestness for her discharge, and wept much at the thoughts of her being looked on as a thief; as to himself he would freely suffer the rigour of the law, but begged some compassion might be shewn to an innocent woman.

Several others appeared against them, and in particular some publicans, where they stopped the nights of the different robberies being committed, and the several names before-mentioned, with others, was bound over to prosecute.

These unfortunate wretches were apprehended by the treachery of one Levi, a Jew, with whom they had had several capital dealings for watches  
and



and other things of value; but this wicked pest to society, thinking they could not reign much longer, and after he had made some thousands by them at the hazard of their lives, went to Sir John Fielding's, and give information where they might be met with, and the hour, he having left their company some hours before.

About the middle of August, Hawke made his escape from Tothill Fields Prison, and one of the turnkeys, not yet taken: he contracted an intimacy with the noted Wm. Cox, of whom he robbed of six guineas, by pulling his breeches from under his head in the night before he made his escape from prison.

After his being at large, he stopped Mr. Byde, the banker, and robbed him of his money and a silver watch of his servants, he having left his gold watch in London.

He attacked Mr. Lamotte, near Tyburn turnpike, and demanded his property; the gentleman gave him a half guinea, ten shillings in silver, and a silver watch: but this being a booty, much inferior to his expectations, he seemed greatly disappointed, and oblige Mr. Lamotte to turn all his pockets inside out, and finding no more money, damn'd the postillion, and bid him drive on.

A few evenings after, the charriot of ——— Spence, Esq; was stopped by three footpads on Kennington Common; but the coachman driving on smartly, left the villains about three hundred yards behind, but Hawke being on the common

man, stopped it again, and robbed the gentleman of three guineas.

In September last, as Mr. Ladbroke was going to Longford, he rode up to his carriage near that place, and presenting a pistol to the driver, and ordered him to stop; upon which Mr. Ladbroke shifted fifty guineas from his breeches to his side coat pocket, and gave him about three pounds, and he proceed on further.

Soon after he robbed Mr. Ward, of a considerable sum of money, and though Mr. Ward, conversed with him for near ten minutes, he could not, on his public examination, swear to him to be the man that robbed him.

He also robbed Mr. Mackey, and Mr. Walter was robbed about the same time, of four guineas, he verily believed Hawke to be the thief, yet he did not chuse to swear to him.

About six months ago, he stopped the York Ay, upon Finchley Common, and robbed the passengers of a considerable booty; and finding a bottle of brandy, and some cold fowl in the coach, he eat and drank heartily; he then rode after four quakers on horseback, whom he robbed of their watches, and about seventy pounds in cash.

He stopped the chaise of Mrs. Leroux, and her daughter; he robbed the old lady, but the young lady being excessively intimidated, fainted away; however, upon her recovery she called him back, and delivered what money she had in her pocket, amounting to about fourteen shillings.

In October he robbed Theophilus Roebottom,  
Esq;

Esq; in his chaise near Wandsworth, of about four pounds and his watch.

Soon after he stopped a landeau and four, at Kensington gravel pits, with four ladies of easy virtue in it; they seemed unwilling to part with their money, as they were acquainted before, but he told them there must be no delay in business, and took from them thirteen guineas and some silver, one gold and three metal watches, their rings, lockets, ear rings, &c. and rode off highly pleased with the adventure; but though he proved the hero of the field for that time, he was glad to go next evening to see them at M---s, where he returned each of them their property, treated them with a handsome supper, and left as drunk as heroines.

A few months ago, near Uxbridge, he accosted a countryman, who gave an account of having just before been robbed of about nineteen shillings by two footpads: he bid him mount behind him, which being complied with, they pursued and overtook the fellows, who our hero robbed of above five pounds, out of which he gave the countryman his money and kept the remainder.

About the same time he stopped Mr. Peally, of Little Chelsea, near Kensington, and demanded his money, which Mr. Peasley positively insisted upon having; an altercation ensued, which was terminated by Hawke producing a pistol, at sight of which Mr. Peasley took from the pocket of his chaise another of the same kind, and  
instantly



stantly discharged it, but the barrel bursting took his thumb and the two first fingers of the right hand : Hawke was so much the gentleman not to take the advantage, but took a white-handkerchief from his pocket, and with great care and seeming tenderness tied up his hand, and ordered the coachman to drive immediately to a surgeon's that lived in the neighbourhood.

As there was something very remarkable in the manner of the offender being apprehended, for he caused a report to be circulated that he was in France, in the utmost indigent circumstances, which was the means he so long escaped, we shall insert a circumstantial account of that transaction as stated by Messrs. Bond and Smith, two of Sir John Fieldings men.

It was some time before they had any reason to suspect but that he was actually in France, but number of informations being lodged at the office in Bow-street, in rapid succession, and the description of the offender perfectly corresponded with the person of Hawke; he having detached himself from his former companions, and lived in a very recluse manner, as the better able to elude the search of his pursuers.

Mr. Smith, governor of Tothill-fields bridewell, hearing that Hawke's wife had been seen at Uxbridge immediately set out for that place, where he learnt the number of the coach that Mrs. Hawke was conveyed in. Upon his return to London, he found that the vehicle belonged to a stable keeper near Hatton-Garden; and



and having procured the assistance of Mr. Bond, went to the yard, and enquired for the driver, whom they questioned pretty closely respecting Hawke's retreat, and found, from the nature of his replies, that he fully conceived their intentions; it therefore became necessary to intice the man from his own neighbourhood, that he might not by some stratagem occasion intelligence to be conveyed to the object of their search, and by that means frustrate their whole plan. With this view they prevailed upon him to accompany them to a public house at Hockley in the Hole; and there by persuasion and threatening to exercise their authority, learnt that Hawke had a lodging at No. 2, in Rose and Crown Court in Shoe-Lane. They then dispatched a messenger for further assistance, and the coachman becoming more communicative, informed them of several material circumstances relating to Hawke; particularly giving a discription of the highwayman's horse; mentioning several times when he had been out upon the animal, which stood in the same yard with his coach; and saying, that he believed him to be at that time at home and in bed.

When some others who had been sent for arrived, they went to the Red Hart in Shoe Lane, where the attack was planned. Bond and Smith, leaving some others at the end of the court, went to the house which the coachman had directed them to, and having looked into the lower apartments, heard the latch of the street door go, when they concealed themselves in a

room upon the first floor: Bond followed a woman into the front room on the second story, where seeing Hawke dozing on the bed, he instantly sprang forwards, and threw himself across him, and exerting his whole strength, with great difficulty kept him down, and prevented him catching up a loaded horse pistol, which lay by his side; after a severe struggle of a few minutes, Smith came into the room, and seeing the highwayman's hand within about two inches of another pistol he snatched it up and probably preserved the life of his companion; for at this time the sheet being twisted about part of Bond's head, his antagonist seemed to have some advantage in the contest; But at last he was subdued, and as soon as he recovered sufficient breath to speak, he cried to his wife, "d---n you madam, where were you all this time?" The poor woman was not able to speak, but her sighs and tears evinced how deeply she was affected at her husband's fate: he did not give up the contest till he found his strength greatly inferior to that of his apponents. After he had been secured, he declared, that they might think themselves very happy in having escaped his vengeance; for, if they had not acted with uncommon degree of prudent courage, he would have blown them to atoms: but soon after being put into the coach in order to be conveyed to Sir John Fielding's, he said he was glad no mischief had happened.

He was publicly examined at the office in Bow-street, when several of the persons mentioned in  
the

the proceeding pages appeared against, and were bound over to prosecute and give evidence.

To give an account of the several charges exhibited against him, would be little more than what has been already said; we shall therefore confine ourselves to the circumstances of Hawke's attack upon Mr. Hart and Capt. Cunningham, in the exact order as they were recited by the first-mentioned gentleman, on his trial at the Old Bailey, when he was ordered for execution, with two others, on Friday the 1st of July, 1774, at Tyburn.

He was first tried on an indictment for robbing Mr. Croucher, in the Gloucester stage, of a gold watch, which was found in Hawke's house; but Mr. Croucher not chusing to swear positively to him, he was acquitted.

He was a second time indicted for robbing Mr. Hart, &c. of one shilling, and sixpence and seven halfpence in money, before Sir James Eyre, Knt. and the Middlesex Jury.

[ *Charles Hart.* ]

Q. What are you?

*Hart.* A gentleman; I live in May's Buildings. On the 28th of last March, between the hours of nine and ten in the evening, Capt. Cunningham, and myself were stopped in a coach near the Half-way-house leading from Knightsbridge to Walham Green, by one man on horseback; he said to the coachman, *God d—n your blood stop, or I'll blow your brains out!* upon which I let the glass down  
and



and he clapped a pistol to my breast, and demanded my money; I had one shilling and sixpence and some halfpence loose in my waistcoat pocket; I gave him that; I had half a guinea in my fob, which I preserved: he said to me, *God d—n you, do you give nothing but halfpence?* I told him it was all I had, and desired him to take the pistol from my breast. In the interim Capt. Cunningham was moving a pocket book from his right hand waistcoat pocket, into his left hand breeches pocket, in which were bank notes to the amount of between four and five hundred pounds; he had near twenty-seven guineas in his breeches pocket, but being in liquor he refused being robbed; the prisoner observed the pocket book, and took the pistol from my breast, and said, *God d—n you, give me your pocket book;* he replied, he would not give it him: the prisoner said, *God d---n you, I'll fire upon you immediately!* Capt. Cunningham told him to fire and be d--n; he did fire within four inches of my head, and made a kind of contusion on Capt. Cunningham's left arm, but got nothing from him, his horse leaped from the coach door, and I observed him feeling for another pistol; I opened the opposite door, jumped out, and assisted Capt. Cunningham out: the coachman said to him, Sir, *for God's sake don't shoot my horses;* he replied, *No, your are an honest fellow, I shall know you again,* and he read the number of his coach, 745:

Q: What did he read it loud?

Hart,



*Hart.* Yes, he spoke it loud; he asked the coachman whether there were any pockets in his coach, the man replied there was; he got off and searched the coach; Capt. Cunningham beat his horse, and d---n him for a scoundrel; when he was off the horse he had a second pistol in his hand I believe from the shortness of it, and which he held presented to me, and swore, *if I came near him he wald blow my brains out*; I was then about five yards from him.

Q. Could you distinguish the pistol?

*Hart.* Yes, it was a fine moon light night. I must confess I was not very fond of going very near him; he got upon his horse again; Capt. Cunningham kept beating his horse with a little swish; the prisoner pulled the trigger of the second pistol at his head, within the distance of something less than a yard, and it missed fire; I threw a stone at him on its missing fire, and he rode immediately to town. He was taken a fortnight or three weeks after; I saw him the day he was taken.

Q. Had you ever seen him before he robbed you?

*Hart.* No.

Q. What hour was it?

*Hart.* Between nine and ten; the moon was near the full; it was very light.

Q. Are you sure the prisoner is the man?

*Hart.* I am certain of it; he was six or seven minutes with us from the first stopping of the coach.

Q. Could

Q. Could you distinguish his person?

Hart. Yes, quite clear.

Q. Could you distinguish his dress?

Hart. Yes, as near as I can charge my memory, the coat he has on now, with a waistcoat of the same, a hat flapped, with his hair hanging loose about his ears. I saw the horse afterwards, but could not swear to its identity; it appeared to be a dark one.

Q. Did he hold the horse by the bridle while he was in the coach?

Hart. Yes, Capt. Cunningham was striking the horse all the time; he struck the prisoner after he was upon the horse.

Q. I should suppose from your account of Capt. Cunningham's behaviour he must be much in liquor?

Hart. He was excessively.

Q. How came you not to draw the Captain off from provoking him?

Hart. He was nearer than I was.

Q. You are sure this is the man?

Hart. Yes.

Q. What is become of the Captain?

Hart. He embarked on the 15th of April for his regiment in Ireland: the coachman attended at Sir John Fielding's, but could not say nothing to the identity of the prisoner.

George Smith. I apprehended the prisoner; I had an information where I should find him; I went to his lodging and found him a-bed, and  
five

five pistols and a cutlass lying in a chair by the bed side: there were two watches and other matters that are in other indictments.

*Prisoner's Defence.*

I am innocent of this affair; I leave myself entirely to the mercy of this honourable Court. I have been guilty of affairs of the kind, but am innocent of this. I am a jeweller by trade: I am twenty-three years old: I have a wife and two small children.

*Guilty, Death.*

When the Foreman of the jury pronounced the fatal verdict, he seemed struck with horror; and, while the effusions of his grief burst from his eyes, in a low tremulous voice, pathetically expressive of the agitated state of his mind, he endeavoured to move the compassion of the court, and succeeded so far, as to draw a sympathising tear from every spectator.

The idea of eternity struck him with great force, and when he was taken from the bar, his general deportment was highly expressive of grief, terror, and repentance: an universal langour seemed to prevade his whole frame; his arms dropped, his eyes were frequently cast towards heaven; and, there was something in his countenance that strongly indicated a desire to conceal the motions of his mind, and give vent in private, to the passion labouring at his heart.

Upon hearing judgment of death pronounced, he experienced all those distressing sensations of  
soul



soul which so shockingly alarming a sentence could give birth to. He pleaded with great earnestness for mercy, urging the pitiable situation to which his catastrophe would reduce an amiable wife and two young innocents.

His behaviour to his wife, who visits him frequently, is remarkably tender; and he with great earnestness, cautions her against continuing of those dangerous connections to which he unhappily introduced her.

In the press yard, he frequently joins in conversations with his fellow prisoners, but never becomes a party in their indecent mirth: and has been often heard to reprimand them for their loose conversation, and indeed never fails to check every tendency to immortality.

When the hour of admitting visitors to the Press Yard is passed, he immediately retires to his Cell, where his time is employed in the most becoming manner; reading religious books, and serious in meditation on the fate he is to meet.

He candidly acknowledges the enormity of his offences, and declares himself wholly resigned to the sentence of the law against him.

May the example of this unhappy man be an instructive lesson to our readers, to avoid the allurements of vice, whose end is bitterness!--And may his conduct in this his hour of sorrow, excite in his miserable companions in iniquity, a consciousness of its enormity, and to turn to the paths of virtue, while it is yet in their power.

On Friday the 1st of July, 1774, about eight o'clock in the morning, the sheriff, with the proper officers, attended at Newgate and demanded the bodies of Hawke and Jones, (the other being respited who were immediately brought into the Press-Yard, and had their irons knock'd off; having both attending divine service in the morning, they were put into a cart, and proceeded to the place of execution, accompanied by the Ordinary of Newgate, and a numerours fight of spectators. Their behaviour was very becoming their fatal sentence, and fervently joined in prayer, acknowledging the number of robberies he committed, and praying for forgiveness of the Almighty and his prosecutors. They arrived at Tyburn about half after ten, who after joining in prayers with the Ordinary in a solemn and striking manner, and taking a second farwel of his friends, they was turn'd off about eleven, in the presence of twenty thousand spectators.

Before he suffered, he made a friend take the silver buckles out of his shoes, and kicked them off, assuming that vain glory, as we suppose, of not dying with his shoes on. He exhorted the people to take warning at his unhappy fate, especially youths who were too fond of company and gaming.

After hanging the usual time, their bodies was cut down and given to their friends for interment; and the body of Hawke was carried to Uxbridge and there buried the Tuesday following.

T H E E N D.



AN ACCOUNT OF  
W A T K I N S O N  
THE NOTED  
S W I N D L E R,

Who died in Newgate, May 14th, 1774.

**T**HE case of Watkinson, which has so long engrossed the attention of the town, seems to be perfectly consistent with our plan: and we shall introduce our discourse with an account of his most remarkable frauds, under a supposition, that by reciting them, many repetitions may be avoided which might otherwise occur, in depicting the characters of some equally notorious villains, who are now practising schemes of destruction upon the unwary and inexperienced.

Watkinson caused advertisements to be inserted in the different papers, intimating, that the advertiser had money to any amount, ready to advance on bond and other security. In consequence of this, Mr. Robinson, of Hatton-Garden, met him at the London Coffee-house, agreeable to the direction in the advertisement. Here the terms of the intended business were adjusted, and a second



cond meeting appointed for the next day; when Mr. Robinson produced two bills of exchange, which he was desirous of having discounted; one was for five hundred, and the other for three hundred pounds, both payable at two months after date. these bills were given to Watkinson, who pretended that a collateral security was necessary, and therefore, proposed that a bond should be given for the same amount as the bills, with a defeasance on the back, purporting, that the said bond should become void, providing the bills were paid in due time. The drift of this artifice not being in the least suspected by Mr. Robinson, he immediately agreed to the proposal, and Watkinson produced an instrument which was executed by the parties. The Swindler then gave a draft on a banker for two hundred and fifty pounds, and as soon as the money was received, borrowed thirty pounds of it on some specious pretext, promising the balance of five hundred and eighty pounds in a few days.

Mr. Robinson, after some days had elapsed, applied for the remaining sum, but finding himself trifled with in a very strange manner, at length became greatly alarmed:—but how much was his surprize aggravated at finding an execution in his house, for the enormous sum of eighteen hundred and fifty-five pounds! and this extraordinary measure was no sooner put in force against him, than he was arrested for three hundred and fifty five pounds more; the villain having added fifty-five pounds to the bill for the hundred, and altered

altered the date so as to make it appear payable in one month instead of two, in order to give an apparant justification to the arrest.

Instead of a bond, Whatkinson provided a Warrant of attorney, on the blank half sheet of which the defeasance was written, and not as defeasances ought to be, on the back of the printed page; so that by dividing the sheet, he became possessed of an absolute and unconditional warrant of attorney; and having crazed the original sum specified in the instrument, made it appear to have been drawn for the obove-mentioned sum of eighteen hundred and fifty-five pounds; so that for the sum of two and twento pounds; the gentleman was reduced to the necessity of either paying twenty-two hundred and ten pounds, or indicting the villian for the frauds and forgeries; he chose the latter mode of procedure; and, many other complaints of a similer nature being lodged against him, he was apprehended and brought before the Bench of Justices in Bow-street, on Wednesday the 23d of March, 1774.

The examination respecting Mr. Robinson's affair being over, and that gentleman bound to prosecute, Mr. De Beuille informed the Bench, that he had applied to the prisoner for the loan of five hundred pounds for the use of his brother-in-law, who was under age; and that he promised to advance the required sum on condition that he (De Beuille) would give his note for the same: This being agreed to, they had several meetings at different coffee-houses, and at length, by making

king use of the same plea he had before done to Mr. Robinson, he got possession of De Beuille's note to the amount of six hundred and fifty-five pounds ten shillings, besides a warrant of attorney for double the sum; so that he was rendered liable to the payment of thirteen hundred and eleven pounds, without having received a single farthing.

A diversity of other frauds and forgeries in matters relative to the advancement of money were proved against him, but as the circumstances attended them, were in every instance similar to those mentioned in the above cases, we shall omit inserting them.

Mr. Hanforth produced a bill which had been paid him by the prisoner, the acceptance and indorsement of which evidently appeared to have been forged. Several other bills, with forged acceptances and indorsements, which he had got discounted, were also brought in evidence against him, and a great number of persons were bound over to prosecute.

Many others who had been defrauded of capital sums by this accomplished villain, would not appear against him, fearing that making a public avowal of the exigencies that occasioned them to take notice of his advertisement, might induce some persons to suspect their circumstances to be upon the decline. And we apprehend, that it is in a great measure owing to this delicacy in regard to the credit of commercial people that the swindling gentry are so seldom brought before the tribunal of public justice.

During



During the examination of Watkinson, he behaved with an uncommon degree of effrontery, and his conduct was in every respect deserving the severest reprehension.

Being asked, if among what was taken from him when he was apprehended, there was any thing he particularly desired to have returned, he said, he insisted upon the WHOLE being returned; but being told by Sir J. Fielding, that many papers being considered as matters of evidence could not be given up, he in a very affronting manner declared, that he would prosecute any person that should dare to with-hold his property, alledging that his proceedings had been fair, open, and honest, and that he could prove them so to the world.

He behaved in the most grossly abusive manner to the justices, and insisted upon being either immediately discharged, or fully committed, that he might not have the SHAME of being brought again to Bow-street, to be made a SHEW of to above ad hundred staring people. Sir John, observed, that he had more reason to be ashamed of the offences charged against him, than of answering for them in a legal manner. But at length his language became too scurrilous to be dispensed with, and he was ordered to be taken from the bar, and conveyed to Newgate in order for trial.

During his residence in that prison he entertained a flattering notion of being acquitted on his trial; but, considering the number of capital offences positively proved against him, it is really astonishing to think how he could conceive so strange an idea.

Before he had been confined many weeks in

Newgate, he was seized with a fever, which on Saturday the 14th of May last, put a period to his existence. But we are happy it is in our power to say, that he became sensible of his approaching dissolution, and behaved with great penitence and resignation.

The account I am going to lay before the public, I hope will be of infinite service to those in town and country:—There is a sort of gentry, whom I call sharps, that resort most of the principal parts of town; one of them is dressed like a countryman, with boots and spurs on, with either a whip or switch in his hand; and when he meets a countryman, or any one he thinks will suit his purpose; he accosts him with “How do’ye do?” “I think I should know something of your face.” and by discoursing, get out what countryman he is; and as they are well acquainted with the country in general, invites the stranger to a public house, where they have a private room: the other two of his companions are on opposite side, and follow them a little behind; when they enter the room, one of them passes for a squire, and seemingly drunk, pulling out a large purse of counterfeit guineas, and throws them on the table, and calls for a shillings worth of punch: he, or his companion, offers the liquor to the strangers, and when it’s out, the squire offers to toss-up with the strangers for another bowl, but they mostly prefer hussel under a hat with three halfpence, and lets the countryman’s partner beat him. By this time they generally find out what money he has got, then the squire offers to hussel for money; the countryman’s friend persuades him to go his halves,

for he is sure of winning; the squire looses once, or twice, and then offers to play for treble the sum; if the stranger's money is gone, his friend, as he thinks, persuades him to lay his watch, for this time he is sure to win all his money back. When they have stript him of all they can, the squire and his companion walks off, leaving the stranger and the other by themselves; he soon after takes him out of the public house some byeway, and then gives him the slip, leaving him destitute of either friends or money, while this villain goes to meet his companions to divide the spoil.

There is another sort of much the same kind, about the invirons of London, that use public houses, where there are skittle-grounds or nine-pins; and if any strangers be concerned in playing, they in general fleece them out of what he has got, by laying bets against each others goes, and whoever the stranger backs, he is sure to be let in for his money.

Another sort of people I will give an account of, but they are not so dangerous as the others, for they get but one-third for their money, and that is Duffers; which generally plyes at Fleet-market, at the foot of London and Westminster bridges, and other public places, with a great coat on, and will stop strangers under a pretence of having India silks and other goods to dispose of very cheap, whereby the deluded purchaser is too apt to believe they are run, and that they have bought a bargain; but when they come to examine them, they soon are convinced to the contrary.

F I N I S.

